

## Focus on Summer Safety

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School is out and kids all over Topeka are fully engaged in the activities of summer. A couple of basic safety tips may make this a safer time for everyone. The first tip concerns fireworks safety. The majority of individuals who are injured by fireworks are under the age of 20. Injuries to the eyes account for approximately twenty percent of these injuries. If you make the decision to use consumer fireworks, make certain that you use the appropriate protective eyewear. Burns and projectile injuries are the most common types of fireworks related injuries. The best advice I can give is to play it safe and go to the show.

The second safety tip concerns sports-related eye injuries. Approximately 40,000 people a year suffer eye injuries while playing sports. Sports-related eye injuries occur most frequently in baseball, basketball and racquet sports. The good news is, almost all sports-related eye injuries can be prevented and there are new and fashionable options for safety prescription eyewear. Whatever your game, whatever your age, you need to protect your eyes! Know that regular glasses DO NOT provide enough protection. Wear proper safety eyewear with polycarbonate lenses. Polycarbonate lenses offer shatter-resistance, ultraviolet protection, and lightweightness.

Finally, be aware of visibility while driving at night. Recently, I was driving on Nottingham Road after dark and a young man was riding his bicycle ahead of me. He was dressed in a black running suit and there were no reflective devices on him or his bicycle. Add to this scenario glare from oncoming headlights, and you can easily see a disaster evolving. The human visual system is least sensitive to large, low contrast targets such as a person in black running after dark. We see high contrast targets, such as black on white, best. This is the technical reason that a black jogging suit on a black road at night is hard to see. Driving with a cataract in the early or moderate stages of development can make seeing things after dark even more difficult – similar to putting on brown sunglasses and driving at night. Be aware that conditions like cataract, glaucoma and macular degeneration have the potential to reduce your contrast vision.

Please call our office at 273-6717 if you have questions about any of the above information. Have a safe summer!



